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AUTHOR Polite, Mary M.
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ABSTRACT

This paper reports the findings of a case study that examined leadership as a shared phenomenon. Conducted during the 1991-92 school year at Cross Keys Middle School in Ferguson, Missouri, data were derived from informal interviews with staff members; observation; formal interviews with 19 teachers, 3 counselors, 3 administrators; and document analysis. Five broad themes related to mission, change, decision making, school culture, and professional development emerged from the data and provided the foundation for the development of a leadership typology. The leadership typology depicted the prestigious, visionary, instructional, positional, and resistance leaders who worked both in harmony and conflict to bring about the changes in the school. These leaders, who were distributed throughout the school, acted on their own to exercise their influence through formal groups and committees or informally through social interaction with the staff. The resulting culture of conflict and tension was accepted as a byproduct of their efforts to challenge individuals to make a shift in their personal paradigm about teaching and learning. Appendices contain the interview protocol and bibliography of documents. Two tables and one figure are included. (LMI)

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Leadership and Change: Working Toward a Paradigm Shift

Mary M. Polite
Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville
(618) 692-3944

Running Head: PARADIGM SHIFT

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Abstract

The national outcry for school improvement has prompted numerous reforms, among these, the national middle school movement. Since the 1960s, restructuring education for early adolescents has been encouraged, prompted most recently by the publication of Turning Points: Preparing Youth for the 21st Century (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989). Like other programs (such as Levin's Accelerated Schools,Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, Goodlad's Educational Renewal Project, Adler's Paideia Proposal), the middle school movement called for changes in the school's structure, organization, program and leadership.

While a historical approach to leadership has focused on the traits, behaviors, and practices of a single, positional leader, recently, phrases such as teacher empowerment, professional autonomy, shared decision-making, and participatory leadership have emerged to more broadly define leadership as a shared phenomenon. Exploration of leadership within this framework, however, has been limited.

This paper reports the findings of a case study conducted at Cross Keys Middle School in Ferguson, Missouri, related to leadership as a shared phenomenon. A set of field notes was developed from the formal and informal interviews, observations, and impressions gathered in the school during the 1991-1992 school year. Key district and school documents were analyzed to provide a context for the study. Five broad themes related to mission, change, decision-making, school culture, and professional development emerged from the data and provided the foundation for the development of a leadership typology.

The leadership typology depicted the prestigious, visionary, instructional, positional, and resistance leaders who worked both in harmony and conflict to bring about the changes in the school. These leaders, who were distributed throughout the school, acted on their own to exercise their influence through formal groups and committees or informally through social interaction with the staff. The resultant culture of conflict and tension was accepted as a by-product of their efforts to challenge individuals to make a shift in their personal paradigm about teaching and learning.

Leadership and Change: Working Toward a Paradigm Shift

Introduction

What makes a school worthy of the title of "exemplary" may not be the answers it has to probing questions related to effectiveness, efficiency, or productivity, but rather, that questions are being asked at all. Perhaps it is not the process of finding the "correct" answers that is most critical, but instead, finding the correct questions. Perhaps it is not the school's organization, structure, curriculum, or policies; its plans, programs, activities, or facilities that form the basis for success. Perhaps it is the school's willingness to confront the difficult issues, to struggle with problems because those problems are recognized, to see what other schools choose to ignore, that makes it rise above others. A school worthy of the title of exemplary may be the one willing to gaze into the mirror and to see what is actually there; to meet the reflection with honesty and, if what is seen is not what is desired, to act purposefully to change it.

This study focused on one school which is engaged in the process of change by learning to ask the right questions about teaching and learning for early adolescents. The school used the national middle school movement as a platform for their change efforts and their story tells how leaders distributed throughout the school worked sometimes in harmony, often in conflict, to bring about substantive change in the school.

Related Literature

The organization of secondary education to include a distinct junior high school program initiated in 1988, had fallen out of favor by the 1960s. By the 1980s, fewer junior highs schools existed which served grades 7,8, and 9, and more middle schools were designed for grades 6,7, and 8 (Alexander & McEwin, 1989). But it was neither the grade configuration nor the name of the school which made the difference. Instead, the unique features the school offered determined whether or not the school embodied the middle school philosophy of meeting the special needs of early adolescents. Emerging practices associated with the middle school movement often included interdisciplinary teaming, flexible block scheduling, advisory and exploratory programs, integrated curriculum, hands-on instruction, heterogeneous grouping of students, and a staff knowledgeable about early adolescents (see for example Muth & Alvermann, 1992; George, Stevenson, Thomason & Beane, 1992). These practices were further articulated by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989) which set forth recommendations "squarely in line with what middle school educators had been saying for years" (George, et. al, 1992, p. 12). Their recommendations

summarized the principles associated with the national middle school movement.

1. Create small communities for learning.
2. Teach a core academic program.
3. Ensure success for all students.
4. Empower teachers and administrators to make decisions about the experiences of middle grade students.
5. Staff middle grade school with teachers who are expert at teaching young adolescents.
6. Improve academic performance through fostering the health and fitness of young adolescents.
7. Reengage families in the education of young adolescents.
8. Connect schools with communities (p. 9-10).

Although the Carnegie Council report gave the middle school movement a national agenda, "schools in the middle remain, programmatically, far from achieving the goals of the Carnegie recommendations" (George, et. al, 1992, p. 14). Leadership which could bring these changes to life in schools was clearly needed.

The literature on school leadership was replete with claims that the autocratic, top-down management style of the past must be abandoned for a more participatory, inclusive approach. Phrases like teacher empowerment, participatory decision making, and shared power appeared consistently in discussions about school leadership, restructuring, and reform.

Like their counterparts at other levels of the system, middle level administrators were also challenged to reform past practice. Effective middle school leaders were those who built a climate of shared decision-making, facilitated personal ownership, enhanced collaboration and consensus, improved communication, and redefined traditional roles to increase responsibility of all school personnel (George, et.al, 1992). Four skills have been identified as critical for the successful development and maintenance of effective middle schools.

1. Leaders must possess a clear understanding of the characteristics and needs of young adolescents and must translate that understanding into a vision of an appropriately organized and effective middle-level school.
2. They must be able to make recognizable progress toward the realization of that vision by organizing staff members, students, programs, time and the building in such a way as to create a unique and effective learning environment based on the characteristics of young adolescents.
3. Leaders must understand what tasks need to be accomplished during the reorganization process and possess the skills of "change agency" necessary to bring those tasks to a successful completion.
4. They must be able to engage the stakeholders in a process of shared decision making in the continued long-term maintenance and improvement of the school(s). (George, et.al, 1992, p. 111).

If "local leaders hold the key to lasting change", as Lewis asserts (1991, p. 40), then we need to fully understand who the local leaders in schools are and how they work together to bring about fundamental change for school improvement. If the national middle school movement is to have credence amidst a myriad of reform initiatives, then how a school could use these principles to bring about fundamental change needs to be better understood. The purpose of this study was to examine the change process related to the transformation of a traditional junior high school to a middle school to more fully understand the leadership needed to implement and sustain these changes.

Research Method

Site Selection. This study was part of a broader research project conducted by the National Center for School Leadership (NCSL) in which four schools were studied. Cross Keys Middle School in the Ferguson-Florissant Public School District, Florissant, Missouri, was selected as one research site during the summer of 1991 because the school had made initial progress towards implementing the reform principles associated with the national middle school movement and the school met the following criteria established for participation in the project.

- (1) Level of implementation: Cross Keys Middle School was consistently named as a school which had undergone major changes in moving from a traditional junior high school to a middle school by contacts with professionals in the national and state middle school associations. The school was known by leaders in the field for being ahead of many others in their change efforts.
- (2) Recognition: Cross Keys had been recognized by the United States Secondary School Recognition Program (1989); named a Missouri School of Excellence (1989); and was chosen as a participant for the Danforth Marginal Learners/Responsive Schools Program (1990).
- (3) Availability: Given the intensity of the research design, the school selected for the research site needed to be located in an area where the researcher could spend adequate time at the school during the year of study. The school was located within a one-hour proximity to the researcher's residence to allow for maximum interaction.
- (4) Willingness: The final selection criterion for the site was the willingness of the district and school to participate in the study. Both district and school personnel willingly participated in the study.

Site Description. One of three middle schools, fifteen elementary, and three high schools in the Ferguson-Florissant School District, Cross Keys Middle school enrolled 641 of the district's 10,976 students in 1991-92. The school's student population

was 44% African-American; 55% White; 1% Asian, of which 28% qualified for free or reduced lunch. Forty-two classroom teachers in the school had an average of 19 years teaching experience. The building principal had fifteen years of administrative experience in the district, the last eight as principal of Cross Keys. The school had two assistant principals, with one and three years of experience in administration respectively, and four full-time counselors. The school was organized into six instructional teams.

Insert Table 1 about here

What happened at Cross Keys beginning in 1985, with the arrival of a new building principal, was markedly different from what had come before. The new principal inspired a school-wide commitment to the reform principles associated with the national middle-grades movement and activity in the school flourished. With a focus on the developmental needs of early adolescents, interdisciplinary teams were reconfigured; curriculum was integrated; instruction became more experientially based; and staff become active participants in the decision-making processes of the school. These changes have been associated with an improvement in student test scores, behavior, and attitude, yet, these changes did not come easily, quickly, or without struggle for the Cross Keys staff. While this struggle would not be apparent to an occasional visitor who would find the public face of the school pleasant and orderly, the school's private struggle was shared during the year of study.

Data Collection and Analysis.

Initial contacts were made with the Ferguson-Florissant Public School central office and building administration during July and August, 1991, and access was gained for the researcher to spend a year in the school gathering data. Between September, 1991 and May, 1992, informal and formal interviews were conducted with staff members, general and targeted observations were completed, and district and school documents were reviewed. A total of 22 formal interviews, including 2 group interviews, were conducted with 19 classroom teachers, 3 counselors, and 3 administrators. Teachers interviewed were identified during formal and informal conversations as key players in the school. An interview protocol was developed for formal interviews (See *Appendix A*) to explore the leadership in the school. Signed consent was collected for each formal interview, which was tape recorded, transcribed and returned to subject for review. Edited transcripts of formal interviews were combined with notes of impressions, informal interviews, and conversations, and observations to develop a 402 page set of field notes for analysis. Key district and school documents were also reviewed to provide supportive evidence for data gathered during interviews

and observations and to develop an accurate context for the research (See *Appendix B*). While the school was not guaranteed anonymity, individual participants were assured confidentiality.

Data were analyzed using a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) by the site researcher. The corpus of field notes was coded and analyzed for themes and concepts which were described and classified into categories following each formal interview and observation. In addition, all data were independently analyzed by research assistants at NCSL. An eight member team met throughout the project to jointly review data to insure that the categories and resultant conceptualizations were comprehensive. The case study was shared with the school in September, 1992, for a final validation of the research by the school.

Results

Results were organized around the five broad themes of mission, change, decision-making, school culture, and professional development to respond to the following questions: "What Did The School Believe?", "What Did The School Change?", "How Did The School Make Decisions?", "What Was the Culture in the School?", and "How Did the School Assist Individuals in the Change Process?". The themes which emerged from data analysis served as the foundation for the development of a leadership typology which describes the leaders distributed throughout the school who worked in harmony and conflict to bring about substantive change.

Mission and Vision: What Did The School Believe? Like many schools, Cross Keys had adopted a formal mission statement that found its way into school and district documents (See for example, ASCD publication, 1988, *Appendix B*). Their mission appeared clearly focused on "educating all students" using a "middle school approach", yet the value of their mission emerged in the debate surrounding its interpretation and use rather than in its rhetoric.

To some, educating all students was interpreted literally. *I feel that we are committed to see that each student learns to the best of his ability. Others were committed to maintain...some standards of academic rigor even if that meant some students would fail. Others thought it is foolish to think you can have 100% success and if you don't that it's the fault of the system.*

Although a general sense emerged that the middle school concept was the best way to meet students' needs, how middle school was defined depended on the speaker. Some looked outside of the school at the scholarly literature for a definition of middle school. Others, however, thought the definition should emerge from within.

There aren't any tablets from God telling us what a middle school should be...I just assumed that whatever these people who are writing about or telling us about the middle school is just advice. I don't consider their opinion any more valid than my own.

And a few in the school were not convinced that the middle school approach was the best to take and *adamantly disagree with the idea that what [the school is] doing is best for kids.*

Internal and External Motivation: What Did The School Change?

Amidst the debate related to mission interpretation, the school used its loosely defined focus on meeting students' needs around a middle school approach to make changes in the school. The school was organized around teaching teams rather than subject-matter departments, and various combinations of team organization and schedules had been implemented to move from *cooperative teams* to *interdisciplinary teams*. The school had identified its commitment to interdisciplinary curriculum by publishing *A Place of Our Own* (1991, *Appendix B*) and plans were developed to continue to move the curriculum from *content-centered* to *student-centered*, calling for increased integration across disciplines. Instructional practices which required *active* rather than *passive student participation* were encouraged, and numerous school-based committees and structures which would increase staff participation in decision-making in the school were implemented.

Some of the changes in the school were prompted by external forces over which the school had no control. A decline in enrollment and reduced financial resources in the state and district caused reductions in staff, larger team and class sizes, and fewer resources in the school. Each time the district cut staff, or implemented new policies or procedures, the school had to respond by making changes in structure, curriculum or in instruction in addition to those which they had initiated themselves. Combined, the internal and external forces which motivated change in the school led to the perception that change was a constant in the school.

Committees and Structures: How Did The School Make Decisions? Both traditional and nontraditional formal structures had been used to involve staff in making decisions in the school. Committees, such as a *Communications Committee*, *Instructional Improvement Committee*, *School Improvement Team*, *Instructional Resource Persons Committee*, and *Staff Advisory Council*, had been used in the school to involve teachers in formulating plans and policies for the school. These committees focused on *daily issues of schooling*, *visionary planning issues*, *staff*

development, and teacher concerns. The formal committee structures in the school were viewed by some as *effective and necessary* and by others as *dysfunctional*.

Insert Table 2 about here

Clearly, however, some felt that the important decisions were made in the teams and without exception, teachers viewed their team as an important vehicle for collaboration, communication, support, and survival. Team planning time was built into the master schedule and provided a daily opportunity for teams to meet to make both routine and substantive decisions. Team planning time was used to *identify students for special recognition or special programs, to adapt the schedule to accommodate team activities, and to share information about school-wide functions.* Other teams used their planning time to *discuss curriculum, develop interdisciplinary units, and to share successful instructional strategies* with teammates.

While the school maintained a sense of autonomy, district-level decision-making also had have an impact on the school and how decisions were made. Direct district intervention resulted in the elimination of a multi-age team in the school although internal decision-making processes had indicated that the team would continue. Other district policies and practices also caused frustration and change in the school. Operations such as *computer generated report cards and high school curriculum requirements* impacted how much freedom and flexibility teachers felt they had to change curriculum and instruction in their school. They had a constant eye on the decisions made at the district level and how those decisions might be interpreted and implemented at the school.

Conflict and Tension: What Was the Culture in the School? Tension in the school was pervasive. Those in the school shared how they survived changes made to them; how they implemented changes made by them; and how they adjusted to changes made around them. Even those who sought change, who thrived on change, and who dealt comfortably with ambiguity and dissonance, acknowledged the tension that was ever-present in the school. Conflict and tension served both as a catalyst for change and as a response to change in the school.

Some in the school spoke of tension as a by-product of change itself. *When you change and change and change, it begins to be demoralizing.* They acknowledged that change requires *real adjustment* and that stress results both when change is desired and when it is not.

Tension and conflict also resulted from differing expectations of the role the building principal. When the principal did not assume the role expected of her by the staff, tension spread. This was clarified when one teacher said to the

principal, *You are the fifth principal in this building, and you are the first one who ever thought about instruction and curriculum. The [previous principals] were all managers of the building. We are having trouble adjusting.* The principal knew that her style differed from what some of the teachers wanted, but remained clear in her intent to move the school towards becoming a *fully functioning middle school*. She described her own style as *support giving* but admitted that she would also *go immediately to control taking* if she perceived that actions taken by teachers had a negative impact on students. She used her vision to define the boundaries for what was and was not in the best interest of students, although she knew that some in the school would not be happy as a result.

Tension and conflict in the school were identified by others as a mask for underlying fear that people experience on a personal level when confronted with the challenge of real change.

[The principal] is real good at providing resources as best she can. She provides pats on the back and motivation. She makes it almost impossible to say, "I don't want to change". It would be almost like admitting that the only reason you're not going to change is because you just don't want to and most professional educators don't want to use that as the last resort.

Some of the conflict in the school resulted from a reconfiguration of power initiated by the principal during her early years in the school. *What she did essentially early on was shift the teacher leadership. In a sense, she took leadership away from people who had had it for years and started to look at other people.* As the power shifted, new individuals became active in the leadership and decision-making in the school. They assumed positions on committees and groups; and emerged with new ideas and expertise. Some viewed this as a change for the better. Some, however, mourned their fall from power.

Resisters in the building contributed to the underlying conflict and tension in the school. Their resistance was both subtle and overt, and was interpreted as both a positive and negative influence in the school. Some felt that there was a *contingent of faculty that have just decided to put their feet down and be obstacles to everything that is being tried in the building.* Others felt that resistance was a result of an *unwillingness, inability, or lack of readiness to change*. Still others felt that resisters helped the school see all sides of an issue before making a decision.

Although tension was pervasive in the school, it was equally obvious that the people in the school were friends. They respected one another and took pride in their school and in each other. They had shared a common history which included important personal and professional milestones and had developed a norm for working together over the years that both supported and inhibited their change

efforts. They had acknowledged their areas of disagreement and dissonance and had defined them as positive signs of growth and change. They remained purposeful and directed, while accepting conflict and tension as tools for their continued growth and development.

Cognitive and Affective Triggers: How Did the School Assist Individuals in the Change Process?

The school used formal and informal staff development opportunities to help staff in the change efforts initiated in the school. District institutes, workshops, and staff development programs were supplemented with released time provided through resources from external grants. An *Adult Learner* strand had been developed so that faculty meetings could be used for staff development on topics such as learning styles or brain growth research, and to develop interdisciplinary units. In addition, summer work time was provided through grant monies. Staff members were active in various professional associations, attended their conferences, and were often presenters at various regional, state, and national conferences. Reading materials on a variety of topics were readily available for staff, and sharing and discussion often occurred during team planning time, as well as during informal times during the school day.

Staff development at the school provided not only the cognitive information needed to understand a given idea, proposal, or strategy, but also allowed teachers to experience the affective meaning associated with a particular change strategy. Staff were encouraged to internalize the information to identify what change really meant at a personal level. When, for example, staff members were asked to prepare a written statement of their *personal turning points* for a presentation the school would make at a national conference (National Middle School Conference Document, 1991, *Appendix B*), they were forced to reflect not only on what they had changed, but why. Experiences like this led for some to a paradigm shift which significantly impacted their ability to implement substantive changes that were good for students, but not necessarily convenient for teachers. The school had worked hard to cause people to expose themselves in personal ways to change and then lived with the dissonance what sometimes resulted.

Clearly the change process in the school was not completed. They had made progress, but knew that their work was not done. They debated, questioned, and challenged one another. They had learned that asking questions was as important as finding answers. They had embraced change and the conflict and tension that were a by-product of their efforts. They were proud of the steps they had taken, and acknowledged that they had gone *kicking and screaming* along the way. They knew that change was the only constant in their story. They knew that their story would continue.

Discussion

The individuals and groups in the school who had been instrumental in bringing about change were identified through formal and informal interviews and observations. A typology was developed by the researcher to describe the **prestigious, instructional, positional, visionary, and resistance** leaders distributed throughout the school who worked at times in harmony and at times in conflict to bring about important changes in the school.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Prestigious leaders, or leaders of influence, were people in the school with *their finger on the pulse of the staff*, who *were willing to admit when [they were] wrong and move beyond that* or who had *a lot of guts and [were] willing to speak up when they saw that things were wrong*. These individuals were complimented often by their colleagues for their integrity, courage, and persistence and for the contributions they had made in the school. These leaders had gained the support of the staff and had willing followers for their ideas.

Instructional leaders, or leaders of curriculum, had earned respect for their understanding and skill in curriculum development and instruction. Teachers who were willing to share their instructional expertise and curricular innovations with others were identified again and again during interviews as critical to the school's development. These were the teachers who could *get people to be a little more creative with curriculum* and were *the ones that other teachers look to as being strong educators*. In addition to individual teachers, one of the school's teams was also identified as critical to the school's movement toward increased use of integrated curriculum and active, hands-on instruction. [Team name] *have an understanding of interdisciplinary teaching and curriculum...as far as leaders and role models, they are the ones to watch*.

Positional leaders, or leaders of groups, were those who held formal leadership roles in the district or building. Some held positions of leadership on district committees, the professional association, and others were department chairpersons or team leaders. The discussions of these leaders focused primarily on the authority vested in the position and how the individual in that position used the authority to bring about change.

Visionary leaders, or leaders of direction, provided the direction, impetus, and focus for the changes which had taken place. *Vision comes from [the principal]. I think she provides the support. I think it also comes from people like [teacher name] who has an idea and wants to try it out*. It was clear in the discussion of vision, however, that not every agreed on what that vision should be and how it should be communicated.

Resistance leaders, or leaders of the opposition, emerged from the disequilibrium that resulted from debates and discussions about conflicting visions for the school's future. These leaders appeared to have a general discomfort with some of the practices and procedures in the school, and although the group identified as the *loyal opposition* was small, their dissension had an impact on the school. These leaders questioned issues, initiated discussion and presented alternative plans through formal and informal channels in the school.

I think we have leaders of the opposition. People who are loyal or otherwise. I think there is some thoughtful opposition here. They legitimately ask, "Why are we doing this?", "How am I going to get this done?", "How am I going to feel good about it if I am only going to do it halfway?" They have a healthy skepticism about things and they want the dots on the i's and the crosses on the t's before they just jump in and start.

There appeared to be an overlap across these five categories of leaders in the school and participation in each role was fluid. Individuals were identified as wielding more than one type of leadership influence in the school over the course of time, depending on the issue and the context. Key leaders emerged naturally and were identified consistently by the participants in the study. These leaders were distributed throughout the school and were often involved in making decisions either alone or through groups. Whether through their teams or committees, through their roles or positions, or through the strength of their individual character, these leaders were willing to risk making decisions which were not always popular in order to move the school closer to implementing its mission.

Summary

This study focused on Cross Keys Middle School because of its progress towards implementing many of the practices associated with the national middle school movement. It was believed that much could be learned by an intense study of the leadership that brought about change in the school. Data were collected in the school between August, 1991 and May, 1992 in the form of formal and informal interviews, observations, and document review. A corpus of field notes was compiled and analyzed to better understand the changes which occurred in the school and the leadership which facilitated those changes.

Five broad themes identified the mission, change, decision-making, school culture, and professional development in the school. A mission loosely defined to meet students' needs using the middle school philosophy was used to guide the school's change efforts. Debate and discussion surrounded the school's mission as teachers raised questions like: "What are students' needs at this age?" "How can

those needs best be met?" "Is the middle school approach the best way?" and if so "Who decides what an effective middle school is?" As the school learned to accept change as a norm, various decision-making structures were instituted to increase staff involvement. Committees which prompted questions about the school's vision like: "Where are we now and where are we headed?", as well as committees which focused on schooling and instructional issues like: "How should we handle in-school suspension?" and "What is the best way to organize curriculum and instruction for early adolescents?". The staff identified their own learning needs along the way and instituted programs for adult learners which would provide them with the content knowledge needed to make change as well as the emotional experience to personalize change. Questions emerged like: "How will this change impact me personally?" and "How will I personally impact this change?"

Conflict and tension developed in the school as a result of their questioning. While traditional social norms and behaviors held the school together, they were simultaneously exploring new ways of behaving and relating. They learned that they could challenge, debate, and disagree as a way to promote growth and change. When the questions were difficult, like: "How do I define what's best for students, when I know that what's best for students is less convenient for me?", the conflict escalated and people in pain looked for someone, or something, to blame.

The five broad themes formed the foundation for the development of a leadership typology which describes the leaders distributed throughout the school. These leaders did not wait for someone else to give them power, but instead, acted on their own to influence the type and rate of change in the school. Defined as prestigious, visionary, instructional, positional, and resistance leaders, individuals and groups in the school worked in sometimes in harmony and often in conflict. Others considering a transition from a traditional junior high school to a middle school may learn from Cross Keys about the role of distributed leaders in the school and how they work to bring about substantive change by asking the right questions.

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Appendix A
Interview Protocol

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1. What do you think you and the others at [school name] are committed to accomplishing?
PROBES: What is being done to achieve this?
What facilitates this work?
What hinders this work?
 2. When was this commitment made?
PROBES: How was this decision made?
How was this decision affirmed?
 3. How would you describe this school to an outsider?
PROBES: How would you describe the climate/culture?
How would you describe the leadership?
 4. How do you know when things are going well at [school name]?
PROBES: And when things don't go well?
What gets done?
How does it get done?
 5. What changes have you seen at this school over the past few years?
PROBES: In leadership? In personnel? In curriculum?
Who are the key players?
Who has not been part of the change effort?
Are they actively resistant?
 6. What was your role in these changes?
PROBES: How do you feel about this?
Has your role changed over the past few years?
 7. How do these changes relate to [the very first answer]?
 8. What changes are still in progress that you think I should observe this year?
 9. What changes would you like to see in the future?
 10. Please think for a minute and tell me who you see as important leaders within the school.
PROBES: How do they help implement the school's commitment?
Were they involved in the change process?
Are you comfortable with this leadership?
 11. What do you do around here? Why do you do what you do around here?
PROBE: What are the most satisfying things about being in this school?
What are the least satisfying?
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Table 1
Cross Keys Middle School Organizational Chart

Team	Grade	* Teachers	Assignment
Team 1	7	5+	math, science, social studies, English, reading- writing workshop, shared LD resource teacher
Team 2	7	5+	math, science, social studies, English, reading-writing workshop, shared LD resource teacher
Team 3	8	6	math, science, social studies, English, reading- writing workshop, LD resource teacher
Team 4	8	7	math, science, social studies, English, art, reading-writing workshop, LD resource
Team 5	7-8	7	math, science, social studies, English, reading-writing workshop, French teacher, LD resource teacher
Team 6	7-8	14	art, Spanish, music, physical education, practical arts

Table 2
Cross Keys Middle School Building-Level Committee Structure

Committee	Composition	Focus
Instructional Improvement Committee (IIC)	8 classroom teachers 1 counselor 1 assistant principal 1 principal	"Daily Issues" (Ex: development of core values/mission; reading program; advisory program)
School Improvement Team (SIT)	5 classroom teachers 1 counselor 1 assistant principal 1 principal	"Visionary" (Ex: Five Year Plans; yearly building plan)
Instructional Resource Persons (IRPS)	10 department chairs 1 principal	"Staff Development" (Ex: brain-based instruction.
Staff Advisory Council	Representatives of each team & support staff Teacher Chair Administrative rep	"Teacher Concerns" (Ex: In-school suspension; hallway supervision; use of the Xerox machine; input for faculty meeting topics)

